

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 13 has been placed in independent form. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that this claim is allowable.

New Claims 17-26 find support at specification page 3, lines 30-34 and page 4, lines 1-3. No new matter has been entered.

The present invention relates to a process for the purification of an aqueous hydrogen peroxide solution first by treatment with a reverse osmosis membrane, and, afterwards, with at least one other purification technique selected from exposure to ultraviolet light, exposure to ozone, and contact with an adsorption resin. Combination treatments that include exposure to ozone have been indicated as allowable.

In maintaining the outstanding obviousness rejection the Examiner has commented, in the sentence bridging pages 3 and 4 of the Official Action, that there is no evidence of record to support the patentability of Applicants' particular order of steps. Applicants here present such evidence in the form of the attached Declaration of inventor Jurgen Bosse.

In the attached Declaration inventor Bosse explains that it has been surprisingly found that reverse osmosis (RO) membranes, while providing a given level of purification, in fact also *contribute* certain impurities to the aqueous hydrogen peroxide solution being purified to such an extent that, in cases where high purity is demanded (such as in the electronics industry), they need to separately be removed. Given this unexpected finding, the order of steps as claimed herein - RO membrane first followed by at least one of exposure to ultraviolet light, exposure to ozone, and contact with an adsorption resin - *is* critical to providing a high purity aqueous hydrogen peroxide solution product that is suitable for use in, e.g., semiconductor processing. Providing the purification steps in reverse order to that presently claimed would leave the impurities contributed by the RO membrane in the

solution, and thereby degrade its usefulness, providing a quite different, and unexpected, result.

Thus, while Applicants disagree that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has been presented,¹ the attached Declaration makes clear that Applicants have in fact provided evidence of unexpected results emanating from their particular order of steps as claimed that would not be provided had the steps been arranged in reverse order. For this reason and those expressed January 4, 2008, Applicants thus request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection, and the passage of this case to Issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ For the sake of brevity Applicants incorporate by reference their remarks made January 4, 2008, in response to the first Official action.